



December 2003
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Warrior News

<http://www.usarc.army.mil/95thdiv/2bde/3-378th/newsletter.html>



3rd/378th

Upcoming Drill Dates

December

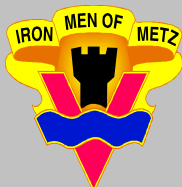
- 13 - 0700 First Formation
Uniform: Class A
0730 – Company Class A
Inspection
Don't forget your BDU's
Lunch: Golden Corral
1300 – Demobilization
Ceremony
- 14 - Uniform: Civilian Clothing
Holiday Party - Omniplex

January 10-11

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3D Battalion, 378TH Regiment
2ND Brigade, 95TH Division
1507 W Lindsey Street
Norman, OK 73069-4301



Commanders Corner



"Do your duty in all things. You cannot do more, you should never wish to do less. "
Robert E. Lee

I am continually amazed by the quality of the soldiers we have in the Warrior Battalion. Every time a challenge presents itself, we have soldiers who step forward. This drill we will be welcoming back A Co, who answered the call of duty last March. Since last drill, we have had two more challenges present themselves, and again we had soldiers step forward. The first, I was tasked to see if I could come up with 12 of our Drill Sergeants who were willing to go to Iraq and conduct basic training. The response was quick, and overwhelming. We had double the number needed to volunteer. In the end, SFC McGill and SFC Nix were selected. Their status is still pending. Four days later, five of our young soldiers were identified to be attached to an engineer unit in Pennsylvania, we had one day to get them notified and to report to the reserve center for SRP. Again, mission accomplished, all five reported, all five are deployable, all five flew out on Nov 29th. They are: SPC Dickey, PFC Gilles, SPC Henry, PFC Taylor, PFC White. I am asking that you join me in keeping all of these soldiers in our prayers. I would not be surprised if we don't have more challenges arrive in the near future, and I know we will be ready to fulfill our duty.

Please keep the referrals coming in. We are finally getting rid of our pending losses, and are currently sitting at 86% strength (this includes the five we lost to mobilization). Join me in welcoming this drill PFC Baucom, SGT Rowell, and SPC Leach. We are doing a great job in retention, we have not had any soldiers become a pending loss since I assumed command in August. The credit for this is on you. I look forward to seeing all of you and your families in December, and wish all of you a wonderful Christmas.

Military Family Tax Relief Act of 2003

On Nov. 11, 2003, President Bush signed into law the Military Family Tax Relief Act of 2003. Highlights Include:

Sale of principal residence – A taxpayer on qualified official extended duty in the U.S. Armed Services or the Foreign Service may suspend for up to 10 years of such duty time the running of the 5-year ownership-and-use period before the sale of a residence. This applies when the duty station is at least 50 miles from the residence – or while the person is residing under orders in government housing – for a period of more than 90 days or for an indefinite period. This election, which is an option for the

taxpayer, applies to only one property at a time. Retroactive for home sales after May 6, 1997. Although taxpayers normally have only three years to file an amended return, qualifying taxpayers who sold a residence before 2001 have until Nov. 10, 2004, to amend their returns for this purpose. Taxpayers amending a return to use this provision should put "Military Family Tax Relief Act" in red in the top margin of Form 1040X.

Tax-free 'hap' – Under the Homeowner's Assistance Program, service members are reimbursed for declines in home values from base closings and realignments. HAP payments have been taxable. Future payments will be tax exempt, an important change for the next round of base closures to begin in 2005.

Military Family Tax Relief Act of 2003

Continued from page 1...

Reserve travel deductions – Drilling Reservists and Guard members will be able to claim as tax deductions any un-reimbursed costs for meals, lodging and transportation when on duty and staying overnight more than 100 miles from home. Such deductions had been allowed only if Reservists itemized on tax returns and out-of-pocket travel costs exceeded two percent of adjusted gross income. The change, retroactive to Dec. 31, 2002, will allow Reservists to take above-the-line" deductions from gross income.

Death gratuity – The death gratuity paid to survivors of deceased Armed Forces members rises to \$12,000 and is not taxable (was \$6,000, with \$3,000 tax-free). Effective for deaths occurring after 9/10/2001. Taxpayers amending a return to use this provision should put "Military Family Tax Relief Act" in red in the top margin of Form 1040X.

Reserve health benefits – TRICARE is now open to some Reserve forces on a one-year test basis. Language in the \$87 billion Iraq supplemental allows drilling Reservists who lack employer-sponsored health insurance to buy into TRICARE with premiums set at 28 percent of cost, or roughly \$420 for individual coverage, \$1450 for family. The bill also makes Reserve and Guard members eligible for military health care from the moment they receive mobilization orders, and eligible to keep TRICARE coverage for up to six months after mobilization.

Twas the Night Before Christmas

Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, in a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.

I had come down the chimney with presents to give, and to see just who in this home did live.

I looked all about, a strange sight I did

see, no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.

No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand, on the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.

With medals and badges, awards of all kinds, a sober thought came through my mind.

For this house was different, it was dark and dreary, I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone, curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.

The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder, not how I pictured a united states soldier.

Was this the hero of whom I'd just read? Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?

I realized the families that I saw this night, owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.

Soon round the world, the children would play, and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day. They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year, because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone, on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.

The very thought brought a tear to my eye, I dropped to my knees and started to cry.

The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice, "Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;"

I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, my life is my god, my country, my corps."

The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep, I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.

I kept watch for hours, so silent and still and we both shivered from the

cold night's chill.

I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark, night, and this guardian of honor so willing to fight.

Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure, whispered, "carry on Santa, it's Christmas day, all is secure."

One look at my watch, and I knew he was right. "Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night."

Commissary Privileges

Reserve and Guard Receive Unlimited Commissary Benefits

The Department of Defense announced today that with the president's signing of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004, effective immediately, the following members and their dependents will be permitted unlimited access to commissary stores:

Members of the Ready Reserve, Individual Ready Reserve and Inactive National Guard, members of the Retired Reserve, and former members eligible for retired pay at age 60 but who have not yet attained the age of 60.

Guard and Reserve members were authorized only 24 commissary shopping days per calendar year until today when the president signed the National Defense Authorization Act, which contained provisions eliminating the restrictions. Commissaries have immediately adopted the new provisions, which means Guard and Reserve members will no longer have to present a Commissary Privilege Card when they shop.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Cadet Burney on his engagement to Cammie Winch. The wedding is tentatively set for January, the couple are still working out the details.

Birthdays - December

Happy Birthday to the members of the 378th and their families.

- SFC Stephen Raney – December 1
- Mallori Smith – December 3
- Dorian Pierce – December 9
- PFC Francisco Perez – December 9
- Brianna Albert – December 10
- Dristen Cowns – December 10
- SPC Christy Corwine – December 21
- Tyler Roller – December 28
- Blake Nolin – December 31
- Christin Vedeau – December 30
- Stephanie Todd – December 30

Operation Shock and Awe II

Thanksgiving has come and gone, and it was apparent the President of the United States had the same idea. Operation Shock and Awe Part II seemed to impact on Baghdad, Iraq again, without one tomahawk being fired or even a single round going downrange. The Executive Branch sent their greatest asset and our most lethal weapon to the heart of Iraq, our Nation's Commander in Chief, President George W. Bush.

The President spent a few hours breaking bread with the troops, but first he served the troops in the chow line along side the enlisted and did it with only the pride seen from that of the Presidency.

The President came into the Mess Tent saying: "I was just looking for a warm meal somewhere, thanks for inviting me to dinner." It was a surreal moment for the men there and for the Nation.

While we were gathering with our loved ones for our Thanksgiving dinner the President thanked us from Iraq, the men and woman of the United States military for our service, and said that they are proud of us and America stands solidly behind us.

The President demonstrated the fundamental values that we strive to train each new soldier who enters our military, Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and

Personal Courage. The Commander in Chief also said we will win because we will stay on the offensive and we will win because we are part of the finest military ever assembled.

I am certain that we all agree, this will be a Thanksgiving that no soldier on duty today, will forget any time soon.

Christmas Party 2003

Sunday December 14 at the Omniplex

MAJ Todd has outdone herself again, she went and booked us a room at the Omniplex for our Annual Christmas Party!! Not only do we get dinner and a free admission to the Omniplex, but we get to bring our families with us this year. We have some awesome gifts for the auction, Theme Baskets from our Companies, great door prizes, and some awesome food planned.

Some of the great items we will have available at the silent auction are: A Gameboy Advance, microwave, portable mini-fridge, crock-pot, lots of great kids toys, a skateboard, and much more...



For those that have never visited the Omniplex here is a little about it:

The Hands-On Science Museum at Omniplex has over 350 hands-on

exhibits and an array of educational programs designed to enlighten, entertain and educate the entire family.

Celebrate Oklahoma's aerospace heritage with the Air Space Museum at Omniplex. With one of the nation's premier collections of aviation and pace artifacts, aircraft and memorabilia, the Air Space Museum takes visitors through the history of aviation and space.

Get ready for an experience like no other! OmniDome Theater - Oklahoma's first large-format, dome-screen theater. A 70-foot diameter dome screen virtually surrounds the audience, while worlds of adventure envelop the senses from Iwerks Entertainment's 15/70 projection system. A state-of-the-art, 36,000-watt digital sound system provides heart-pounding sound and effects to complete the experience. Don't miss it!

The Kirkpatrick Galleries at Omniplex hosts an extensive collection of art and artifacts from around the world. The Kirkpatrick Galleries now has 16 permanent collections and numerous exhibitions each year.

The Omniplex is located next to the Oklahoma City Zoo and across the street from Remington Park at 2100 NE 52nd Street.

Demobilization Ceremony

Saturday December 13, 1:00 PM

You are invited to the 3rd/378th Demobilization Ceremony for Alpha Company. They were officially demobilized in November, we would like you to join us in giving them a proper Welcome Home! The Ceremony will be held Sunday December 13, 1:00 PM at:

Joe A Smalley Center
1507 West Lindsey Street
Norman, OK

Everyone is welcome to attend and we hope to see you there.

If you have any questions your Point of Contact is Mr. Cornell.
jack.cornell@us.army.mil
405-360-3786

Welcome Home Alpha Company

Alpha Company Officially Demobilized

There was a demobilization ceremony at Ft. Sill during the second week of November for a Company of our Drill Sergeants sent out to support one of our Country's most critical missions, to train newly enlisted soldiers. Since January of this year, 17 men and woman of our ranks have been working on active duty.

The duty was tough and the days were long. On their last cycle of trainees to graduate, to watch them in action was to see a rock steady veteran team of individuals performing with the professionalism and dedication which could only be expected from a Drill Sergeant company. All but one of our Drill Sergeants had lost weight, apparently one had found that the chow hall had a special appeal and actually put on a few pounds (we won't mention any names).

During the December drill weekend, the members of Alpha Company have been invited back to attend a welcoming home and Unit demobilization ceremony. To ensure that they all know how proud we are of the duty they completed and how honored we are to have them as part of our Battalion, it is in this way we show our homage. The ceremony is set for Saturday, December 13th at 1300 hours. Families are welcome and we hope that we have a good turn out for the welcoming event.

Please join me in welcoming Alpha Company back into our ranks. The soldiers that volunteered from other Companies to fill the gap have been sent back to their respective commands. Although it was only a Company of personnel, each Company within the Battalion had contributed to our cause and the end result was simple, success, mission complete.



3RD BN/378TH REGT Mobilizing Soldiers Again

During the final week of November, our Battalion processed five soldiers for deployment. These five particular individuals were not Drill Sergeants, they were not Officers, or even NCO's. There was not enough time for the fanfare of mobilization, nor the ceremonies that are normally associated with such an action. Five of our most junior enlisted were selected for involuntary mobilization for the expertise they acquired in their chosen MOS.

They are part of the Corp of the Army that focuses on rebuilding the infrastructure of any region requiring skilled personnel to perform under less than ideal conditions, they are our Combat Engineers. Our soldiers were selected by USARC from a wide base of personnel due to their ranking, MOS qualification, and deployability status. Each one of these soldiers was surprised to

find they were selected and each one displayed the kind of professionalism that is normally only found in a Drill Sergeant.

The Unit to which they have been deployed is aware that they are receiving Drill Sergeant candidates and have given their

word they will be treated as if they were family. The gaining Unit has obtained some of our Unit's finest, that have been raised with the values and determination that only a Drill Sergeant Battalion could instill.

To this end, we'll defend and for the five soldiers that have left our ranks to join the men on the line, we know that they will do just that.

PFC Taylor, PFC Gilles, PFC White, SPC Henry, and SPC Dickey all stood proudly together for our photo-op and are expected to return to our Unit in about 18 months, at which time they will continue to pursue the coveted Drill Sergeant patch. They departed for train up with their gaining Unit on Saturday, immediately following Thanksgiving with their families.

We wish them well.

